

REMARKS

Claims 1 – 12, 14 – 18, 20 – 26, 28 – 41, 43 – 60, and 62 – 87 are now pending in the application. Claims 1 – 12, 15, 17, 18, 23 – 26, 28 – 35, 37, 39 – 41, 43, 44, 46, 47, and 49 – 59 stand rejected. Claims 13, 14, 19 – 22, 27, 36, 38, 42, 45, 48, 60, and 61 have been objected to. Claims 1, 14, 15, 18, 20, 25, 40, and 49 have been amended, and Claims 13, 19, 27, 42, and 61 have been cancelled, herein. Claims 62 – 87 have been added to better claim Applicants' invention and are broadening in nature, thereby not limiting any equivalents. New Claims 62 – 87 do not present new matter. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the present amendments and following remarks. The above amendments and following remarks are believed to be fully responsive to the outstanding Office Action and the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw his previous rejections.

Claims 1 – 12, 15, 17, 18, 23 – 26, 28 – 35, 37, 39 – 41, 43, 44, 46, 47, 49 – 59 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Hofmann et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,938,945) taken with Reid (U.S. Patent No. 4,434,348) and Dixon (U.S. Patent No. 3,278,720). This rejection is respectfully traversed. It is believed that the originally filed claims are patentably distinct over the cited references.

Independent Claim 1 has been amended to essentially include the allowable features originally set forth in objected to Claim 13, with minor grammatical revisions. Independent Claim 15 has been amended to include the allowable features originally set forth in objected to Claim 19, with minor grammatical revisions. Independent Claim 25 has been amended to include the allowable features originally set forth in objected to Claim 27,

with minor grammatical revisions. Independent Claim 40 has been amended to include the allowable features originally set forth in objected to Claim 42, with minor grammatical revisions. Independent Claim 49 has been amended to include the allowable features originally set forth in objected to Claim 61, with minor grammatical revisions.

New independent Claims 62, 74, 77 and 82 and their respective dependent claims have been added to better claim Applicants' invention and incorporate previously presented claims which the Examiner has stated would be given favorable consideration if suitably recast in independent form. For example, independent Claim 62 essentially includes the allowable features originally set forth in objected to Claim 60, with minor grammatical revisions. Similarly, independent Claim 74 essentially includes the allowable features originally set forth in objected to Claim 20 with minor grammatical revisions. Likewise, independent Claim 77 essentially includes the allowable features originally set forth in Claim 19, with minor grammatical revisions. Finally, independent Claim 82 essentially includes the allowable features originally set forth in objected to Claim 61, with minor grammatical revisions. It is submitted that these new claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the instant rejection be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office

Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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